



EDIBLE  
GARDENING  
SERIES

# Kiwis

Kiwis need a strong arbor, trellis for support and annual pruning. Most kiwis require a male and female for cross pollination. (The exception of Issai Hardy kiwi which is self-fruitful). You only have to plant 1 male kiwi for 8 female kiwis. Male plants do not produce fruit.

## • Fuzzy Kiwis

Hardy to 0°F to 10°F. They have large fruit (like the ones in the grocery store) and superior storing quality – up to 6 months. They can produce over 100 pounds of fruit per vine. They can grow as much as 15 to 20 feet of vine from a single bud in a year. They bloom in May, and you harvest their fruit in October to early November. Plant 15 feet apart.

## • Hardy Kiwis

Hardy to -10°F. Fruit is the size of a large sweet cherry. Skin is smooth and consumed with fruit. You can harvest 100lbs or more of fruit from one hardy kiwi. Plant 15 feet apart. Harvest September to October.

## • Kolomikta Kiwis

Hardy to -30°F. They grow 10 to 12 feet tall and wide. Bloom in March and harvest fruit in August. Small fruit is very sweet and have a superb aroma and flavor. One of the reasons they are grown is for their beautiful green, pink and white foliage.

## EXPOSURE

Full sun to part shade.

## PLANTING

We recommend **Gardner & Bloome Soil Building Compost**, **Dr. Earth Starter Fertilizer** and **Bonide Root n Grow**. See our **Planting Guide** for further instruction. Good drainage is essential. Plant in an area where your kiwi is protected from high winds and not in a frost pocket.

## FERTILIZING

Apply **Dr. Earth Fruit Tree Fertilizer** in the early spring at leaf swell and again after bloom in early June. Apply one-third to half a pound of **Ammonium Sulfate** per vine in the spring to boost fruit production and fruit size.

## WATERING

Kiwis are shallow rooted and need large volumes of water during entire growing season. Water in summer is a must! Symptoms of drought are: drooping foliage, browning of the leaves around edges, complete defoliation. Lack of water will reduce fruit size, reduce flower numbers and induce early fruit drop so it is important to keep your kiwis watered.

## MULCHING

Spread 2 to 3 inches of **Soil Building Compost** around the base of each kiwi in a 2- to 3-foot diameter. This will help with moisture control, weed control and supply some nutrients for the kiwi plant.

## FLOWERING

Flowering takes place in late May to early June, and normally occurs on 3-year-old vines. To set blossoms on older plants, alternate a period of watering and drying. Thoroughly soak 2 days in a row, then let drain for 4 to 5 days to induce setting buds.

*Please turn the page for more information.* ➔

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## HARVESTING

Harvest usually takes place in late September. It is hard to tell when the kiwis are ripe. We suggest picking a few and let ripen, usually for 3 to 5 days. Then taste, if the kiwis are sweet enough, harvest the rest of the fruit.

## SUPPORT / PRUNING

Vines must be supported on some type of structure. A 6-foot T-bar trellis with 3-5 horizontal wires is the most common type of support. Pergolas, arbors and other structures can be used as well

All fruit are produced on new growth that emerges from one year old wood. Large, bulbous fruit buds are easy to distinguish from flat buds for foliage.

The purpose of pruning is to maximize new fruiting wood and to balance vegetative growth with fruit production, and to allow light to get to the fruit. Prune only when the vines are fully dormant.

The fruiting lateral method of pruning is the easiest for kiwi fruit. This is done by training two cordons, permanent branches, straight up to the middle wire before it is allowed to branch. When the vine is several inches above the wire, it is then time to allow it to branch. At this time, you want to pinch it back to 2 to 3 inches below the wire. When the branches begin to grow, select two strong canes and cut off the rest. Cut these canes back to 24 to 36 inches in the dormant season. If the vine does not reach the wire the first year, cut it back to 4 to 8 buds above the ground and retain a single, strong vine for the next year.

The second season, select fruiting laterals spaced 24 to 26 inches apart along the main cordons. Allow cordons to continue to increase in length but cut fruiting laterals just beyond the outside wire. Laterals will fruit for 2 to 3 years depending on their vigor.

In the second summer of the fruit lateral growth, canes emerging from the lateral will produce fruit at their bases. During the growing season, usually May or June, cut these canes back to 6 to 10 buds beyond the last blossoms. This will help avoid excess twining and channel energy to the fruit.

Remove most new laterals arising from the cordon, especially those with strong upright growth. Leave enough laterals to replace old, fruiting canes that will need to be removed as their productions declines.

During the second winter of a lateral growth, cut it back, leaving only two or three canes that fruited the previous season. As they fruit the following summer, cut them back to 6-10 buds past the last blossom.

In its third dormant season, remove the fruiting laterals. Thus pruning mature vines, and renewing one third of the fruiting wood each year. Also remove twining and crisscrossing canes during dormant season pruning.

## WRAPPING/ WINTER PROTECTION

Wrap bottom 4 feet of the trunk with insulation in the winter to protect it from splitting. Splitting can occur at temperatures below freezing especially if warm sunny days are followed by very cold frosts.

## LABELING

Make sure to label your male and female kiwis. The only way you can tell if they are male or female is when they flower.

### CHECK LIST

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|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kiwi Trees                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Dr. Earth Fruit Tree Fertilizer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Soil Building Compost        | <input type="checkbox"/> Ammonium Sulfate                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dr. Earth Starter Fertilizer | <input type="checkbox"/> Stretch Tie or Chain Lock       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bonide Root n Grow           | <input type="checkbox"/> Labels                          |